

Remarks

The Official Action of June 10, 2005 has been carefully considered. Consideration of the remarks and amendments presented herein and reconsideration of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4, 6, 8-13, 15, 18-22, and 24-32 remain in the present application and are believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 2-3, 5, 7, 14, 16-17, and 23 have been canceled. Claims 1, 4, 6, 8-12, 15, 18-22, and 24 have been amended, and claims 25-32 have been added. Support for each of the claim amendments and new claims can be found within the specification and figures. For example, support for the electronic speed system can be found in the specification at page 10, line 12 through page 11, line 20.

I. Information Disclosure Statements

Applicant mailed a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement and Form PTO-1449 to the Patent Office on August 18, 2004. However, an initialed copy of this Form was not returned to Applicant with the recent Office Action. Applicant hereby respectfully requests that the Examiner consider the references listed on this Form and provide Applicant with a copy of the Form upon which the references have been initialed.

In addition, Applicant submits herewith a Fourth Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement and Form PTO-1449. Applicant hereby respectfully requests that the Examiner consider the references listed on this Form and provide Applicant with a copy of the Form upon which the references have been initialed. Applicant appreciates the Examiner's assistance in this regard.

II. The Objection to the Drawings

The drawings are objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a). In particular, the Official Action indicates that the drawings do not show (1) "generator rotor ... integrated with the

engine", (2) "inverter coupled with a speed regulating system", (3) "clutch disengage features and controls", and (4) "drive wheel". These objections are traversed and reconsideration is respectfully requested. With respect to the first objection, Applicant respectfully directs the Examiner's attention to FIGS. 1A, 1B and 2A, whereby FIG. 2A is a partially exploded perspective view depicting an internal combustion engine (item 32) having an integral generator (item 34) which comprises a rotor (item 64) and a coil assembly (item 60) (see specification at page 4, lines 17-19, and page 9, lines 19-26), while such an engine as fully assembled is depicted as item 32 in FIGS. 1A and 1B. It is therefore Applicant's contention that the present drawings adequately depict the claimed features in this regard.

With respect to the second objection, a proposed replacement sheet is herewith provided which clarifies FIG. 3 to depict an electronic speed regulation system coupled with the generator, the engine, and the interface circuitry. Support for this amendment to FIG. 3 can be found in the specification at, for example, page 11, lines 11-20.

With respect to the third objection, Applicant respectfully directs the Examiner's attention to the clutches depicted as item 45 in FIG. 2A and as item 145 in FIG. 2B. The clutch 45 is described in the specification at page 11, lines 24-31, and the clutch 145 is described at page 12, lines 9-13. Applicant accordingly submits that the present drawings adequately depict the claimed clutch features.

With respect to the fourth objection, Applicant respectfully directs the Examiner's attention to the drive wheels depicted as items 22 and 23 in FIGS. 1A and 1B and described as such in the specification at, for example, page 6, lines 25-27. It is therefore Applicant's contention that the present drawings adequately depict the claimed drive wheel.

In light of these remarks and the proposed Replacement Sheet submitted herewith, Applicant submits that the objections to the drawings have been overcome, and respectfully requests that these objections be removed.

II. The Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1, 4, 6, 8-13, 15, 18-22, and 24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite for a variety of reasons. These rejections are traversed and reconsideration is respectfully requested. Specifically, while it is believed that the original claims were definite to one of ordinary skill in the art, Applicant has herein amended each of these claims to provide greater clarity, and it is accordingly believed that each of the rejections has been overcome as a result of these amendments. Support for each of the claim amendments and new claims can be found within the specification and figures. Reconsideration of these rejections is respectfully requested.

III. The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 4, 6, 8-13, 15, 18-22, and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,870,811 to Steele and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,181,019 to Frank or U.S. Patent No. 5,504,417 to Kern et al.

The Official Action contends that Steele teaches a gasoline powered electrical lawn mower which provides electrical power for electrical tools from its receptacle, but admits that Steele fails to teach an inverter and control system for regulating generator voltage. However, the Official Action asserts that it is well known in the art how to regulate power output of the generator, as is shown by Frank or Kern et al., and that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to design a lawn mower as taught by Steele with addition of an inverter and power regulation as taught by Frank or Kern et al. in order to have better voltage regulation and modern controls.

Applicant submits that each of the power equipment apparatuses defined by claims 1, 4, 6, 8-11, and 25-26, and the walk-behind mowers defined by claims 12-13, 15, 18-22, 24, and 27-32, are nonobvious over and are patentably distinguishable from Steele, either alone

or in any arguable combination with Frank and/or Kern et al. Accordingly, these rejections are traversed and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

A person of ordinary skill in the art would have had no motivation to combine Steele with Frank and/or Kern et al. to reach the power equipment apparatus and walk-behind mowers as are respectively recited in independent claims 1, 12 and 20. For example, Steele does not teach or disclose the electronic speed regulation system recited in independent claims 1 and 12, and dependent claim 21, and in fact does not seem to disclose any form of engine speed regulation whatsoever. The Official Action apparently agrees in this regard, but then relies upon Frank or Kern et al. for this teaching. Applicant believes that one skilled in the art at the time of the present invention would not have looked to Frank and/or Kern et al. in an attempt to resolve the deficiencies of Steele with regard to an electronic speed regulation system, and that these references are accordingly not properly combinable. In particular, a person having ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to consider art relating to complex and dedicated-use portable generators (Frank and Kern et al.) when seeking to efficiently incorporate a low-cost, lightweight generator as an added feature on a power equipment apparatus (e.g., a walk-behind mower). Moreover, the Official Action cites to no motivation or suggestion in the art to combine the references. To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, there must be some suggestion or motivation to combine cited references. See MPEP 2143.01. For these additional reasons, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is improper and should be removed.

Additionally, Steele, either alone or in any arguable combination with Frank and/or Kern et al., fails to teach or suggest each of the elements of the claims. For example, none of these cited references, alone or in any arguable combination, teach, disclose or otherwise suggest a walk-behind mower having a deck which is substantially formed from a material having a relatively high electrical resistance such that the deck is a poor conductor of electricity, as recited, for example in independent claims 12 and 20. For this reason, claims 12 and 20, as well as those claims dependent thereon, are nonobvious over the cited

references, and should therefore be allowed. Likewise, none of these cited references, alone or in any arguable combination, teach, disclose or otherwise suggest a power equipment apparatus having a deck which is substantially formed from a material having a relatively high electrical resistance such that the deck is a poor conductor of electricity, as recited in dependent claim 9. For this reason, dependent claim 9 is also nonobvious over any arguable combination of Steele, Frank and Kern et al. and should therefore be allowed, as should claim 26 which is dependent upon claim 9. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claims 9, 12-13, 15, 18-22, 24, and 26-32 is improper and should be removed.

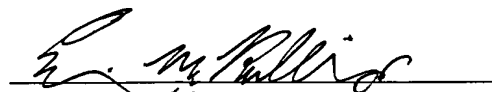
The dependent claims are allowable as being dependent upon allowable independent claims, as well as for additional reasons. For example, Steele, either alone or in any arguable combination with Frank and/or Kern et al., fails to teach, disclose or otherwise suggest a power equipment apparatus having an immobilizing device for selectively preventing movement of the walk-behind mower when the conditioned electrical power is accessed at the receptacle, as recited in dependent claim 11. Furthermore, these cited references also fail to teach, disclose or otherwise suggest a walk-behind mower having an immobilizing device for selectively preventing movement of the walk-behind mower when the conditioned electrical power is accessed at the receptacle, as recited in dependent claims 18 and 31. For these additional reasons, claims 11, 18 and 31 are nonobvious over the cited references and should therefore be allowed. Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claims 11, 18 and 31 is improper and should be removed.

As there are a number of elements of the independent and dependent claims that are not taught or suggested by the cited references, and there is no suggestion or motivation to combine the references cited, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is inappropriate and should be removed. Accordingly, it is believed that the rejections are overcome and that claims 1, 4, 6, 8-13, 15, 18-22, and 24-32 are in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and early allowance of this application.

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Respectfully submitted,

By

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Eric M. Robbins", is written over a horizontal line.

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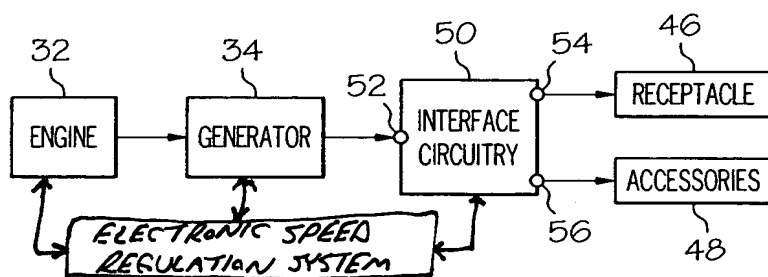


FIG. 3

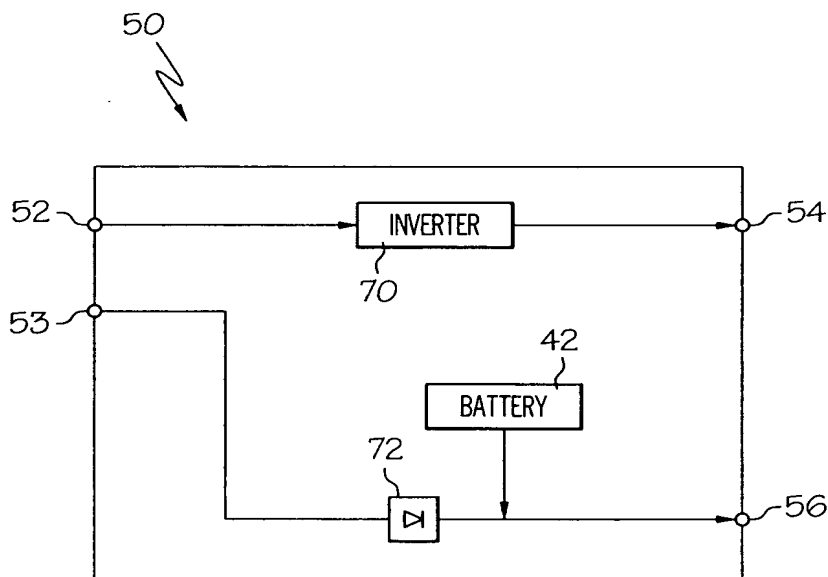


FIG. 4A